

We claim:

1. A system for use in enabling printing of a document, the system comprising:

5 a printing device configured to establish a communication link with a computing device, the printing device including memory having print software stored therein, the print software being transferable to and executable on the computing device and, upon execution, configured to enable the computing device to print documents to the printing device;

10 wherein the printing device is configured to download the print software to the computing device upon establishment of the communication link between the printing and computing devices.

15 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the print software includes a print driver.

20 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the print software includes a print application configured to send a print job from the computing device to the printing device.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the communication link is a wireless communication link.

5. The system of claim 4, wherein the wireless communication link is an infrared communication link.

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6. The system of claim 4, wherein the wireless communication link is a radio frequency communication link.

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7. The system of claim 1, wherein the communication link is a hardware link.

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8. The system of claim 7, wherein the hardware communication link is a USB communication link.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein the printing device includes a file system accessible by the computing device.

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10. The system of claim 9, wherein the file system includes a start-up program configured to automatically execute and download the print software to the computing device, upon recognition of the file system by the computing device.

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11. The system of claim 1, wherein the printing device is configured to identify print software that is compatible with the computing device.

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12. The system of claim 11, wherein the printing device is configured to select the compatible print software for downloading to the computing device.

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13. The system of claim 1, wherein the communication link is established in response to a signal from the computing device to the printing device.

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14. The system of claim 1, wherein the printing device is configured to periodically broadcast a signal to the computing device for the purpose of establishing the communication link.

15. A method for use in enabling printing on a printing device, the method comprising:

detecting the establishment of a communication link between a computing device and the printing device; and

5 in response to the establishment of the communication link, downloading print software stored in memory of the printing device to the computing device, the print software being useful in the computing device printing documents on the printing device.

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16. The method of claim 15, wherein downloading print software includes sending the print software via a wireless communication link.

15 17. The method of claim 15, wherein downloading print software includes sending the print software via a hardware link.

18. The method of claim 15, further comprising sending a print job from
20 the computing device to the printing device.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein sending the print job includes sending the print job via a wireless communication link.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein sending the print job includes sending the print job via a hardware link.

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21. The method of claim 15, further comprising automatically executing and downloading the print software to the computing device, upon recognition of a file system by the computing device.

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22. The method of claim 15, further comprising, identifying print software that is compatible with the computing device.

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23. The method of claim 22, further comprising, selecting the compatible print software on the printing device for downloading to the computing device.

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24. The method of claim 15, further comprising selecting print software from a plurality of software components stored in memory of the printing device.

25. The method of claim 15, further comprising signaling the printing device and establishing the communication link in response to signaling the printing device.

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26. The method of claim 15, further comprising periodically broadcasting a signal from the printing device for the purpose of establishing the communication link.

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27. A program storage medium readable by a computing device, the program storage medium tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the computing device to perform a method for use in enabling a computing device to print on a printing device, the method comprising:

15 detecting establishment of a communication link between the computing device and the printing device; and

in response to the establishment of the communication link, downloading print software stored in the memory of the printing device to the computing device, the print software being useful in the computing device to print documents
20 on the printing device.

28. A printing device comprising:

memory having a print driver configured to enable printing on the printing device;

and

5 a communication link selectively established between the printing device and a computing device to enable download of the print driver from the printing device to the computing device in response to receipt of a signal.

10 29. A printing method comprising:

receiving a signal to establish a communication link between a printing device and a computing device;

establishing the communication link with the computing device;

15 upon establishing the communication link, downloading a printer driver stored in memory of the printing device to the computing device via the communication link, the printer driver being useful in the computing device printing on the printing device;

receiving a print job from the computing device;

and

20 printing the print job on the printing device.

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30. A printing device, comprising:

a file system;

print software stored in the file system; and

5 means for communicatively coupling the printing device to a computing device so as to allow the computing device to selectively download from the printing device portions of the print software.

10 31. The printing device of claim 30, wherein the print software further includes a start-up program usable for initiating downloading from the printing device of the portions of the print software.

15 32. The printing device of claim 30, wherein the portions of the print software correspond to characteristics of the computing device.

20 33. The printing device of claim 30, wherein the characteristics of the computing device are selected from a group consisting of an operating system identifier, an application program identifier, and a computing device identifier.

34. A processor - readable medium for a printing device having processor-executable instructions thereon which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

detect establishment of a communications link between the printing device
5 and a computing device; and

in response to the establishment of a communications link, uploading print software stored in memory of the printing device to the computing device, the print software being useful in the computing device for printing on the printing device.